Hiring and/or Admissions Policies for Colorado College Geology and Environmental Studies Programs

The Colorado College Geosci URGE pod is composed of faculty from the Geology Department (GY) and Environmental Program (EV) at Colorado College. We are a primarily undergraduate institution (PUI) with limited tenure-track hiring opportunities. Therefore, in this analysis, we focused on hiring processes for both TT and 1-year visiting faculty and admissions of undergraduates into CC and into our programs.

HIRING AND RETENTION POLICIES FOR FACULTY AND 1-YEAR VISITORS
We recognize from the URGE readings that hiring and retaining faculty from diverse backgrounds requires a multi-dimensional approach, and so break down the current process into the institutional context, recruitment, transition, and retention. In blue italics after every section, we include proposed changes and improvements for the GY and EV programs.

● Institutional context: In 2018, Colorado College declared its intention to become an antiracist institution. This initiative has led to the recruitment of a leadership team committed to antiracism. This includes a three-part DEI team composed of: Rosalie Rodriguez (Senior Associate Dean for DEI for students and head of the Butler Center), Peony Fhagen (Senior Associate Dean for DEI and faculty development), and Barbara Wilson (interim Director of DEI for staff). Our incoming president, L Song Richardson, has stated her commitment to the antiracism initiative. Along with the leadership team, we also have a Diversity and Equity Advisory Board (DEAB) and Antiracism Implementation Plan Oversight Committee (AIPOC). Our faculty handbook is undergoing review from an antiracism team and our faculty governing body is engaged in antiracism training. A limiting factor in faculty leadership is the relatively small numbers of faculty from diverse backgrounds, particularly at the associate and full professor ranks, who are often over-extended in service roles. Starting with the antiracism initiative in 2018, the senior hiring initiative is meant to bring in tenured faculty to diversify the curriculum and faculty, and provide mentors to pre-tenure faculty of color. Future: The GY and EV departments have not taken advantage of the senior hiring initiative yet, but will look into these possibilities, as well as any target of opportunity hires or cluster hires.

● Faculty recruitment: Starting in 2020-21, all hiring committees for tenure-track positions undergo DEI trainings that encourage the use of rubrics (GY has used rubrics for ALL hires since 2019), implicit bias training, and other tactics to ensure a diverse applicant pool and an equitable hiring process. A new component will soon be added to this program that centers on recruitment strategies that can be done all year even when not actively conducting a search. The Recruitment Handbook has been revised in light of these trainings. Tenure track and one-year visiting positions are posted in a wide range
of online listservs and organizations, though we note that limited funding for one-year positions means these may reach fewer potential applicants. Future: request a funding pool through Dean’s Office to pay for faculty/visiting faculty ads to organizations serving diverse communities. Currently, the EV and GY departments advertise positions formally to: AGU, GSA, NAGT, SACNAS, NABG, ESWN; and informally through Twitter and other social media to GeoLatinas and BlackinGeoscience. In the future, we will also reach out to colleagues at other institutions that lead in granting PhDs to Black, Latinx, and Indigenous geoscientists, using databases such as Table 11 in Merit Beyond the Mirror.

For the Riley Scholars in Residence Program (RSiRP), which provides 1-2 year positions for PhDs of diverse backgrounds to engage in teaching and research at a PUI so that they are more competitive for TT offers, we recruit from the Consortium for Faculty Diversity. In the future, the GY and EV departments can take a greater role in introducing potential Riley Scholars to the Consortium for Faculty Diversity. Through experience, we have found that many potential Riley candidates are not aware of the Consortium and would not have been eligible for RSiRP.

- Transition: The summer before starting, new tenure track and 1-year visitors participate in a 2-3 day new faculty orientation led by the Crown Faculty Center. This centers around creating a cohort mentality and emphasizes an inclusive and antiracist approach to teaching and mentoring students (based on 2019 NFO when Schanz participated). Throughout the academic year, the cohort participates in blocky new faculty training and an early summer faculty retreat (pre-2020). Future: The experiences of 2019 and 2020 new faculty suggest the NFO did not provide enough detail about governance structures and other norms around the College. This partly reflects the change in Dean leadership from 2018 to 2019 that disrupted, among other things, the faculty mentoring program. This feedback was compiled by Dean Fhagen and will be part of the new 2021 Mentoring Alliance Program (see below).

Before 2019, faculty mentors were assigned to new faculty on a one-on-one basis; however, this program anecdotally varied in success based on personalities of mentor and mentee and implied a seniority structure. In 2021, the Mentoring Alliance Program (MAP) will begin, which pairs new faculty in teams with a more senior faculty member. The senior faculty mentor receives training and compensation. Future: The 2019 and 2020 new faculty cohorts will be invited to join the MAP groups; in order to see where more support is needed, we can gather data on which of the 2019 and 2020 faculty opt in to the program to see if there are any systematic trends or gaps in the transition/retention that led to these faculty feeling they needed more mentorship.
As faculty transition from pre-tenure to post-tenure, the Chairs & Directors Development Program and the Equity & Power Course Development Program support faculty development using inclusive and antiracist pedagogies across divisions.

- **Retention:** The pre-tenure and newly tenured faculty groups at Colorado College contain most of the faculty of color; a key concern for the College is retaining these faculty through ensuring their success and well-being. While new development programs (mentioned above) help faculty transition to post-tenure and leadership positions, and the Crown Faculty Center’s programming provides continual writing and development support (such as the early summer faculty Retreat, writing groups, manuscript workshops, support trauma-informed pedagogy and online teaching/learning) we are working on intentional antiracist retention strategies. Futures: Currently, no exit interviews capture the reason for faculty departure; Dean Fhagen is currently developing a plan for exit interviews. The annual review and 3rd year/tenure review and promotion processes are currently being evaluated and modified to value antiracism work. The Geology Department, as a result of this URGE session and the upcoming 3rd year review of Schanz, is currently modifying the written promotion and tenure requirements for scholarship, which have not been updated since 2012. The update will include an emphasis on scholarship that is done in an inclusive manner. Another clarification needed in writing, at the faculty handbook level, is how different service work is being evaluated at different stages of promotion and review. Some challenges from the Block plan (particularly for GY and EV where teaching classes can take up 9am-4pm on all weekdays, excluding time needed for prep) include managing expectations and demands as research programs are becoming more important for tenure and promotion, and keeping open communication about expectations when we often have opposing teaching schedules.

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**ADMISSIONS POLICIES FOR UNDERGRADUATES AND MAJORS INTO OUR PROGRAMS**

Similar to faculty recruitment, admitting, retaining, and attracting students to our majors is a multi-stage process, and we have broken this down into recruitment, admissions, and transition - facilitated by Colorado College programming and offices - and retention/recruitment into the GY and EV majors.

- **Recruitment:**
  Funded travel opportunities from the Admissions Office supports travel expenses for underrepresented students (first-generation and students of color) and their parents to visit Colorado Springs and engage in academic and student life programming.

  We work with Questbridge National College Match that matches low-income students with colleges around the country; this allows us to recruit in communities that otherwise may not be aware of Colorado College.
The **Colorado Pledge** provides financial support to Colorado families to make Colorado College as financially accessible as the public Colorado universities.

The newly developed **Stroud Scholars** program invites students from minority-serving high schools and those from groups underrepresented at Colorado College to participate in a 3-year summer program with guaranteed admission and financial support to Colorado College upon completion. This program started in Summer 2020. **Future: GY and EV faculty are currently not involved in the program and intend to become involved in the future. A potential conflict is the summer timing, as natural science faculty conduct student and faculty research during the summer.**

- **Admission:** In 2019, Colorado College became test optional and eliminated the SAT/ACT requirement. The admission team evaluates students in the context of their high schools and communities (such as availability of AP courses) and looks for qualities such as intellectual engagement, self-motivation, and resilience that could portend success at CC. Our incoming class is currently more diverse than previous classes, suggesting our recruitment efforts and changes to admissions policies are changing our student demographics away from the upper-class white demographic that has historically characterized Colorado College.

- **Transition:** For students from underrepresented groups and first generation students, the **Bridge Scholars Program** creates a cohort and introduction to the Block Plan and college through a two-week pre-fall class. The cohort continues to meet throughout the year with student and faculty mentors. **Future: Natural sciences faculty under-participate in the Bridge Program; GY is planning to apply in the future and have reached out to the director, Emily Chan, to indicate our interest.**

- **Retention/recruitment into GY/EV:** We have noted that our introductory courses are much more diverse than our major composition. A potential problem we have identified is the amount of support and assessment types offered in those courses, which tend to emphasize writing. **Future: Training in upcoming webinars such as “Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Writing Pedagogies” (attended by Schanz), as well as using multiple assessment strategies can help support students from diverse backgrounds. Our majors also offer many paid research & career opportunities; we will establish clear and consistent communication of these opportunities to majors and potential majors and be intentional about inviting students to do research. Another potential barrier to students from diverse backgrounds in our major are the assumptions and visual representations of geoscientists as white and outdoorsy. We are working on providing examples of a range of geoscientists in our courses, being open about the stereotype, and providing support for field trips. The latter will be emphasized in our Session 6 deliverable.**